

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A text-generation method comprising:
 - receiving data records, wherein each data record includes one or more data fields and a field value associated with each data field; and
 - generating a text-string for each data record, wherein each text-string includes one or more text-based data descriptors, such that each data descriptor includes:
 - a field descriptor that defines a specific data field within the data record to which the text-string is related, and
 - a value descriptor that defines the field value associated with the specific data field.
2. The data conversion method of claim 1 further comprising storing the text-strings as a text-based data file.
3. The data conversion method of claim 2 wherein the text-based data file is an ASCII file.
4. The data conversion method of claim 1 wherein each text-string further includes a record identifier that identifies the data record to which the text-string is related.
5. The data conversion method of claim 1 wherein each data descriptor includes one or more starting characters, one or more separator characters, and one or more ending characters.
6. The data conversion method of claim 5 wherein the field descriptor is positioned between the separator characters and one of the starting characters and the ending characters.

7. The data conversion method of claim 6 wherein the value descriptor is positioned between the separator characters and the other of the starting characters and the ending characters.
8. The data conversion method of claim 1 wherein the data records is representative of the medical records of patients.

9. A search method comprising:
- defining a first target value for each of one or more data fields within a database record structure of a database, wherein the database includes a plurality of data records;
 - searching a plurality of text-strings, wherein each text string is associated with one of the data records and includes one or more text-based data descriptors, such that each data descriptor includes:
 - a field descriptor that defines a specific data field within the data record to which the text-string is related, and
 - a value descriptor that defines the field value associated with the specific data field; and
 - generating a first result set by identifying one or more text-strings that include a value descriptor that is essentially equivalent to at least one of the first target values.
10. The search method of claim 9 wherein one or more of the first target values includes one or more wildcard descriptors.
11. The search method of claim 9 further comprising retrieving the data record associated with one or more of the text-strings identified in the first result set.
12. The search method of claim 9 wherein the text-strings may be stored as a text-based data file.
13. The search method of claim 12 wherein the text-based data file is an ASCII file.
14. The search method of claim 9 wherein each text-string further includes a record identifier for associating the text-string and the data record to which the text-string is related.

15. The search method of claim 9 wherein each data descriptor includes one or more starting characters, one or more separator characters, and one or more ending characters.

16. The search method of claim 15 wherein the field descriptor is positioned between the separator characters and one of the starting characters and the ending characters.

17. The search method of claim 16 wherein the value descriptor is positioned between the separator characters and the other of the starting characters and the ending characters.

18. The search method of claim 9 further comprising:

defining a second target value for each of one or more data fields within the database record structure of the database;

searching the plurality of data records included in the database; and

generating a second result set by identifying one or more data records that include a field value that is essentially equivalent to at least one of the second target values.

19. The search method of claim 18 further comprising retrieving one or more of the data records identified in the second result set.

20. The search method of claim 9 wherein the data records is representative of the medical records of patients.

21. A computer program product residing on a computer readable medium having a plurality of instructions stored thereon which, when executed by the processor, cause that processor to:

receive data records, wherein each data record includes one or more data fields and a field value associated with each data field; and

generate a text-string for each data record, wherein each text-string includes one or more text-based data descriptors, such that each data descriptor includes:

a field descriptor that defines a specific data field within the data record to which the text-string is related, and

a value descriptor that defines the field value associated with the specific data field.

22. The computer program product of claim 21 further comprising instructions for storing the text-strings as a text-based data file.

23. The computer program product of claim 22 wherein the text-based data file is an ASCII file.

24. The computer program product of claim 21 wherein each text-string further includes a record identifier that identifies the data record to which the text-string is related.

25. The computer program product of claim 21 wherein each data descriptor includes one or more starting characters, one or more separator characters, and one or more ending characters.

26. The computer program product of claim 25 wherein the field descriptor is positioned between the separator characters and one of the starting characters and the ending characters.

27. The computer program product of claim 26 wherein the value descriptor is

positioned between the separator characters and the other of the starting characters and the ending characters.

28. The computer program product of claim 21 wherein the data records is representative of the medical records of patients.

29. A computer program product residing on a computer readable medium having a plurality of instructions stored thereon which, when executed by the processor, cause that processor to:

define a first target value for each of one or more data fields within a database record structure of a database, wherein the database includes a plurality of data records;

search a plurality of text-strings, wherein each text string is associated with one of the data records and includes one or more text-based data descriptors, such that each data descriptor includes:

a field descriptor that defines a specific data field within the data record to which the text-string is related, and

a value descriptor that defines the field value associated with the specific data field; and

generate a first result set by identifying one or more text-strings that include a value descriptor that is essentially equivalent to at least one of the first target values.

30. The computer program product of claim 29 wherein one or more of the first target values includes one or more wildcard descriptors.

31. The computer program product of claim 29 further comprising instructions for retrieving the data record associated with one or more of the text-strings identified in the first result set.

32. The computer program product of claim 29 wherein the text-strings may be stored as a text-based data file.

33. The computer program product of claim 32 wherein the text-based data file is an ASCII file.

34. The computer program product of claim 29 wherein each text-string further includes a record identifier for associating the text-string and the data record to which the text-string is related.

35. The computer program product of claim 29 wherein each data descriptor includes one or more starting characters, one or more separator characters, and one or more ending characters.

36. The computer program product of claim 35 wherein the field descriptor is positioned between the separator characters and one of the starting characters and the ending characters.

37. The computer program product of claim 36 wherein the value descriptor is positioned between the separator characters and the other of the starting characters and the ending characters.

38. The computer program product of claim 29 further comprising instructions for:
defining a second target value for each of one or more data fields within the database record structure of the database;
searching the plurality of data records included in the database; and
generating a second result set by identifying one or more data records that include a field value that is essentially equivalent to at least one of the second target values.

39. The computer program product of claim 38 further comprising instructions for retrieving one or more of the data records identified in the second result set.

40. The computer program product of claim 29 wherein the data records is representative of the medical records of patients.

41. A searching system comprising:
- a server system including a computer processor and associated memory, the server system having a database that includes a plurality of data records;
 - wherein the server system is configured to:
 - define a first target value for each of one or more data fields within a database record structure of the database;
 - search a plurality of text-strings, wherein each text string is associated with one of the data records and includes one or more text-based data descriptors, such that each data descriptor includes:
 - a field descriptor that defines a specific data field within the data record to which the text-string is related, and
 - a value descriptor that defines the field value associated with the specific data field; and
 - generate a first result set by identifying one or more text-strings that include a value descriptor that is essentially equivalent to at least one of the first target values.
42. The searching system of claim 41 wherein the server system is further configured for retrieving the data record associated with one or more of the text-strings identified in the first result set.

43. The searching system of claim 41 wherein the server system is further configured for:

defining a second target value for each of one or more data fields within the database record structure of the database;

searching the plurality of data records included in the database; and

generating a second result set by identifying one or more data records that include a field value that is essentially equivalent to at least one of the second target values.

44. The searching system of claim 43 wherein the server system is further configured for retrieving one or more of the data records identified in the second result set.

45. The searching system of claim 41 wherein the data records is representative of the medical records of patients.

46. The searching system of claim 41 wherein the server system is coupled to a distributed computing network.

47. A data structure comprising:
- a database including a plurality of data records, wherein each data record includes one or more data fields, and a field value is associated with each data field;
 - a text-string for one or more data records, wherein each text-string includes one or more text-based data descriptors, such that each data descriptor includes:
 - a field descriptor that defines a specific data field within the data record to which the text-string is related, and
 - a value descriptor that defines the field value associated with the specific data field.
48. The data structure of claim 47 wherein the text-strings may be stored within a text-based data file.
49. The data structure of claim 48 wherein the text-based data file is an ASCII file.
50. The data structure of claim 47 wherein each text-string further includes a record identifier that identifies the data record to which the text-string is related.
51. The data structure of claim 47 wherein each data descriptor includes one or more starting characters, one or more separator characters, and one or more ending characters.
52. The data structure of claim 51 wherein the field descriptor is positioned between the separator characters and one of the starting characters and the ending characters.
53. The data structure of claim 52 wherein the value descriptor is positioned between the separator characters and the other of the starting characters and the ending characters.
54. The data structure of claim 1 wherein the data records is representative of the medical records of patients.